



City tests system of turning wastewater into drinking water

Thursday, 30 June 2011 18:49



SAN DIEGO (CNS) - The city of San Diego began a one-year program today to test a system that purifies wastewater so it can be used for drinking water.

The experiment at the North City Water Reclamation Plant in the Miramar area is designed to provide scientific data to city officials, who will determine if the process is safe.

"A stable, dependable supply of water is critical for San Diego's growing community," said Lani Lutar of the San Diego County Taxpayers Association. "The coalition members support investment in the water purification pilot project because it is anticipated to result in a local, drought-proof water supply source that will help decrease the city's reliance on expensive, imported water."

The plant currently recycles wastewater that is then used for irrigation. The program will purify one million gallons of water daily, which will be pumped into the irrigation system once it's tested. If the test is successful, the city's initial plans call for construction of a new reclamation facility and a 23-mile pipeline to the San Vicente Reservoir, which provides much of the city's drinking water. That means the water would be treated a second time before it goes through the taps of San Diego residents.

Gabriel Solmer, of San Diego Coastkeeper, said the technology already is used around the world.

Lutar and Solmer are co-chairwomen of the Water Reliability Coalition, which includes business, environmental, consumer and labor organizations interested in exploring the possibility of recycling wastewater.